



Key English Resources on FamilySearch.org

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Objective

Patrons will learn to:

- use the research tools available on the England Research page
- find records available at FamilySearch.org

Introduction

FamilySearch.org, located at <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>, is a website that offers free access to billions of records in thousands of digital collections from countries all over the world. Because records are usually created by governments or bodies determined by location, most genealogical information is found by searching records by place. Record collections at FamilySearch.org are organized by location. Applying this understanding to the following resources will help maximize your ability to find your ancestor at a precise time and place.

The England Research Page

The England Research Page brings together several of the research tools at FamilySearch into one location. All record collections represented on the page are specific to England research.

To navigate to the England Research Page from the FamilySearch home page:

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/location/1986340?region=England>

1. On the top left side of the FamilySearch home page, click **Search** and then select **Records** from the dropdown list. A page with search fields on the left and a world map on the right will load.
2. On the world map, hover your mouse pointer over the area representing the British Isles and click when it is highlighted in yellow.
3. Select **England** from the list of countries that appears.

The above search will take you to the England Research Page, which is divided into six sections. The left side of the page focuses on guidance and education under the following headings:

- Learning Courses
- The Research Wiki
- Current Indexing Projects

The right side of the page is dedicated to historical records specific to England research. The headings for each section include:

- Indexed Historical Records
- Image-Only Historical Records
- Catalog Material

Learning Courses

Genealogical tips and instruction from research experts are available in the form of classes or recorded webinars and linked under Learning Courses. You may access all courses specific to England by clicking **See all England courses in Learning Center**. The default titles in the Learning Center have been filtered to those with England in the title. More specific filtering may be accomplished by adding a subject, location, presenter, or title into the search box.

A few helpful videos you may want to consider are:

“How to Trace England Ancestry Online,” presented by Todd Knowles, AG®

<https://www.familysearch.org/help/helpcenter/lessons/how-to-trace-england-ancestry-online>

“British Resources on FamilySearch.org,” presented by Craig L. Foster, AG®

<https://www.familysearch.org/help/helpcenter/lessons/british-resources-on-familysearch-org-part-1>

Research Wiki

The Research Wiki is your genealogical encyclopedia of information and how-to articles to guide you through each step of your research. There is a Wiki page for every county and parish in England that explains what records are available, strategies on how to search those records, and links to online databases to help you quickly find the records you need.

To navigate to the England Genealogy Wiki page from the England Research page, click the **View Wiki for England** link under the **FamilySearch Wiki** heading. From the England Genealogy Wiki page, use the links in the England Wiki Topics for help about jurisdictions, records, and research strategies. The interactive map may be used to navigate to the wiki content for specific counties and parishes.

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/England_Genealogy

Current Indexing Projects

Indexing is the process of extracting information from a record and entering it into a database, making it possible to search records by name. The indexed record collections at FamilySearch are the result of the labor of many volunteers. Indexing is a fantastic way to familiarize yourself with different record types, the content of what you may expect to find in the records, and old handwriting styles. Information about indexing and how to volunteer can be found at:

<https://www.familysearch.org/indexing/about>

Indexed Historical Records

Indexed record collections consist of extracted data from records which has been entered into searchable databases. The Family Search collections on the England Research Page have been filtered to reflect records specific to only England. These collections are listed below the search fields in the Indexed Historical Records section of the page. To see a complete list of these collections, click on **show all 88** located below the blue search button.

The list of collections includes icons to help identify what the collection contains.

- Collections **without a camera** are indexes only.
- Collections with a **small camera** to the left of the title are records that have been indexed and have a link to a digital image.

- Collections with a **large camera** to the left of the title are records that have images available to view at a partner website. While the index is searched at FamilySearch, you will be redirected to another website to access the image. Some of these websites may require a paid subscription. However, all partner websites can be accessed without a fee in the Family History Library and family history centers.

Searching Historical Records

- In the search fields, enter a name, location, and date of a life event using a range of years for a date. A list of possible matches will be shown from the index. If a match is not found, try alternate spellings or wildcards: (*) replaces one or more characters while (?) replaces exactly one character.
- Click on the name of the person to see the details of the indexed record transcription.
- If available, always examine the image of the original document by selecting to **browse the film** located in the blue box in the upper right of the window. This may require browsing through the images to locate the exact document. Instructions for how to browse images are given under Image-Only Historical Records below.

Image-Only Historical Records

If you cannot find the information you need in indexed record collections, Image-Only Historical Records may have your answer. These records have been digitized but are not indexed and cannot be searched by name. However, they may be browsed manually. To use these records effectively, you must know your ancestor's parish and the approximate date of the event.

Browse Record Collections

1. Select the applicable collection from the list of image-only databases. Each title identifies the record type and the location and date range of the records. A title page describing the collection will load.
2. Select the option to browse through images. You may need to select a location to browse from a list of jurisdictions.
3. Use the tools in the upper left corner of the image viewer to navigate through the images.
4. After locating an image, use the tools in the upper right corner of the image viewer to attach it to your tree, download, or print it.

Tips for Browsing Images

- Collections showing a small key above the camera icon are subject to contract restrictions. To view these, you should visit the Family History Library or a family history center near you.
- You may need to examine the beginning pages of a collection to determine how it is organized.
- Some registers are divided by event and may contain information from the same years in multiple places.
- Some registers may include neglected entries on the last page or pages.
- If you need assistance in reading old handwriting tips can be found online at sites such as this one: <https://media.familysearch.org/11-tips-for-reading-old-handwriting/>
- Help with handwriting, or other genealogical questions can also be addressed by posting a question in the FamilySearch Community. <https://community.familysearch.org/en>
- Some records may include Latin words. A word list to help understand the document can be found here: https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Latin_Genealogical_Word_List

FamilySearch Catalog

The Catalog is a portal to the vast resources held by the Family History Library and family history centers around the world. New items are updated daily to reflect the current digitization projects underway worldwide. The England Research Page organizes catalog material specific to England by record type, and includes all media formats such as online databases, microfiche, microfilm, books, or computer files. Knowing how to search the catalog effectively is the key to finding records. While the catalog offers eight types of search options, the place search is the default search option explained below.

How to use the FamilySearch Catalog

1. The catalog is located at <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog>. To navigate from the England Research page, click **Catalog** from the sub menu at the top left of your screen. The FamilySearch catalog page will load.
2. To search by place, enter the parish, county, or country that held the type of record you wish to locate. For example, to find a baptismal record from a parish register, enter the name of a parish. A list will appear. Select the desired location and click **Search**. A page will load listing the record types that have catalog material from that location.
3. Click on the desired record type, for example, Church records, to see the collections that exist in the catalog for that location.
4. For digitized record collections, the catalog title describes the records, names the jurisdiction that held the records, and provides the range of years covered to ensure you are accessing relevant material. Click on the title of the desired collection to see the complete catalog information.
5. To see if the selected collection is available online, scroll down to the section titled **Film/Digital Notes**. In the **Format** column on the right, icons describe the availability of the record.

The FamilySearch Digital Library

FamilySearch offers a free virtual library of hundreds of thousands of historic books from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah and other partner libraries from all over the world. Many of the books are family and county histories, biographies, directories, and yearbooks. Anyone with an internet connection can search and read the digitized collection through the online image viewer. Books subject to copyright may be searched but cannot be viewed online.

How to use the Digital Library

1. The Digital Library is located at <https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/>. To navigate from the England Research page, click **Books** from the sub menu at the top left of your screen.
2. Search the digital library by title, author, location, surname, subject, or keywords. A list of books will load. You may wish to filter your search using the tools on the left of the page. The access level tells you if the book is available to read online.
3. Click on a book to select it. A title page will load. Under the image of the book, select **View All Pages**.

Explanation of tools in the image browser

- Zoom in and out with the + and – icons.
- Search for text within the book by selecting the magnifying glass.
- Download the book with the arrow down icon. This feature is not available for all books.

Genealogies

Genealogies are family trees that have been contributed to FamilySearch from a variety of sources such as Ancestral File, Guild of One-Name Studies, and Partner Trees. The submitted genealogies are not the same as the FamilySearch Family Tree but can give you hints in extending your family lines. You may also upload your own tree to assist other researchers. Information found in the pedigrees vary from tree to tree and should be verified.

How to search Genealogies

1. Genealogies are located at <https://www.familysearch.org/search/family-trees>. To navigate from the England Research page, click **Genealogies** from the sub menu at the top left of your screen. The Genealogies Search main page will load.
2. Enter your ancestor's name with an event or location and date range in the search fields. Click **Search**. A list of possible matches with the source from which the information originates appears.
3. Click on the name of an individual to view their pedigree.